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THE FIFTH ALL-UNION DOSAAF CONGRESS IN THE USSR



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THE FIFTH ALL-UNION DOSAAF CONGRESS IN THE USSR

Published articles, speeches, and broadcasts connected with the Fifth All-Union DOSAAF (Voluntary Society for Co-operation with the Army, Air Force, and Navy) Congress contain a new note of urgency concerning civil defense tasks in the USSR. There are indications in the publicity surrounding the Congress that the Soviet military and Party leaders have reexamined civil defense as a part of over-all strategy and have reached the conclusion that civil defense must now be considered one of the basic elements in military preparedness.

As contrasted with the Fourth All-Union DOSAAF Congress, civil defense received increased emphasis at the Fifth Congress. Nearly every principal speaker devoted part of his address to civil defense, according to published reports. (Considerable emphasis at the Fourth Congress was given to technical training and sports aspects of DOSAAF activities.) Although Marshal Konev spoke of civil defense at the Fourth Congress, Marshal Chuykov was much more emphatic at the Fifth, describing a need for immediate action to fulfill DOSAAF's "primary" mission of training the civilian population. Throughout the publicity accorded the Fifth Congress can be found frequent and insistent references to Communist Party control and support for the accomplishment of this "primary mission." An article in the pre-Congress publicity mentioned for the first time the fact that DOSAAF was engaged in a second civil defense task -- "the training of command and supervisory personnel of non-militarized civil defense formations." This training too was referred to as an "immediate" matter. ^{1/} At the Fourth Congress, DOSAAF statutes were changed or amended; the Fifth Congress adopted an entirely new statute which requires the DOSAAF Central Committee to develop and approve programs for civil defense training. Other unique developments at the Fifth Congress include an address on civil defense by the head of the Soviet Red Cross and the election of a Deputy Minister of Defense (Rokossovskiy) to the DOSAAF Presidium.

Several themes recur in speeches and published articles associated with the Fifth Congress or with the regional meetings and publicity that preceded it, including the following assertions: (1) DOSAAF civil defense training in some areas of the USSR is inadequate; (2) present DOSAAF tasks stem from decisions of the 22nd Party Congress; (3) civil defense training must be improved with the assistance of the Party, the government, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and other organizations; (4) the civil defense course presently being given

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the Soviet public ("Ready for PVO, Second Grade") must be completed by the end of 1962; and (5) increased propaganda through all public media (television, radio, moving pictures, and the like) should be used to stimulate public interest in civil defense and to supplement other civil defense instruction.

DOSAAB has had primary responsibility for public civil defense training in the USSR since the formation of the society in 1951. Since 1955, civil defense training for the Soviet citizen has been accelerated and altered to include instruction in defense against nuclear weapons. Although the announced goal of Soviet civil defense is the training of every civilian, the program has been plagued with shortcomings in both the quality of instruction and the number of trainees.

In December 1961, two DOSAAF meetings were held in Moscow, one a conference for DOSAAF propagandists and the other the Fifth Plenum of the Central Committee of DOSAAF. Three leading figures in Soviet civil defense -- I. Varrenikov, Chief of the Civil Defense Administration of the DOSAAF Central Committee; Army General D. D. Lelyushenko, Chairman of the DOSAAF Central Committee; and Colonel General O. V. Tolstikov, member of the DOSAAF Presidium and former Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs for MPVO (Local Anti-air Defense -- that is, civil defense) attended both meetings. Lagging Soviet civil defense training was discussed, particularly at the Plenum. Lelyushenko, speaking at the Plenum, stated that "the imperialist aggressors are preparing a surprise attack employing thermonuclear, chemical, and bacteriological weapons against the USSR and other socialist countries. DOSAAF is charged with the important mission of training the population in the methods of defense against the means of mass destruction..." He went on to comment concerning the unsatisfactory state of Soviet civil defense training and to suggest steps for improvement.

A resolution adopted by the Plenum stated, "The priority mission of DOSAAF is to train the entire population in measures of antiatomic, antichemical, and antibacteriological defense." The resolution charged all DOSAAF committees with taking measures to insure civilian training and with "increased responsibilities" in such training. Both the Plenum resolution

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and Lelyushenko's speech referred to missions assigned to DOSAAF as a result of the deliberations of the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of the USSR (CPSU). 2/ The Plenum also passed a decree convening the Fifth All-Union DOSAAF Congress and establishing the agenda for the Congress. 3/

Between the December 1961 DOSAAF Plenum and the convening of the All-Union DOSAAF Congress on 22 May 1962, articles in the DOSAAF press on a number of occasions stressed the importance of the civil defense training mission. Thus, Varrenikov, writing in Voyennyye znaniya in March, stated, in part:

In preparing for the Fifth DOSAAF Congress, each primary organization must do everything required to fulfill successfully the priority mission of DOSAAF -- namely, the training of the population in defense methods against weapons of mass destruction under the "Ready for Air Defense, Second Grade" program. This task must be fulfilled everywhere by the end of the year /1962/.

A second important mission of DOSAAF organization...is the training of command and supervisory personnel of nonmilitarized civil defense formation...Civilian defense schools must occupy themselves with the immediate* matter of insuring high quality training of command and supervisory personnel of non-militarized formations...

The successful fulfillment of the missions of DOSAAF organizations in the field of civil defense depends above all on the force and purposeful direction of the work of DOSAAF committees and their coordination with the Red Cross and Red Crescent committees and trade union and Komsomol organizations. DOSAAF committees must constantly report to Party organs on the progress of work and must utilize their support...4/

Tolstikov earlier had given some of the reasoning behind the new training. In former periods (that is World War

*Analyst's emphasis.

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II), cities could rely on their own ability to perform civil defense missions. Now, however, "under modern conditions," additional manpower and equipment are needed. The "enormous volume" of rescue and repair work requires the enrollment of "tens and hundreds of thousands" of people and the use of additional equipment, transportation, and other "means." Tolstikov continued, "For this reason, local anti-air defense has ceased to be local; it has become a state system and is now called civil defense, for it requires the active participation of each Soviet citizen..." Tolstikov clarified to some extent the reference above to "non-militarized civil defense formations," stating that these formations are "primarily intended to work to eliminate the effects of an enemy attack" and that such units now are being created on kolkhozes, sovkhozes, and other rural economic enterprises. 5/

The DOSAAF press also published a series of articles covering regional meetings of DOSAAF held at the republic and the oblast level preparatory to the All-Union DOSAAF Congress. Although some local successes in civil defense training were pointed out, accounts of the meetings (and other civil defense articles published at the time) referred several times to specific failures in the civil defense training program. Methods were advocated to improve training performance, including the use of inspectors, additional support by various organizations, better distribution of training aids, improved instructor training, and supplementary propaganda to include lectures, public contests, filmed short subjects, and radio and television broadcasts. 6/

It may be assumed that one part of the propaganda for increased civil defense participation is represented by the publication of the destructive effects of nuclear weapons and statements insisting that the US and its allies are preparing for nuclear attack on the USSR. In the past, Soviet authorities were reticent about publishing the destructive effects of nuclear weapons in media available to the general public. Before 1961, Soviet literature generally described nuclear weapons in terms of the nominal atomic bomb (20,000 tons of TNT equivalent). Early in 1961, however, rather full effects were described for a 10 megaton hydrogen bomb. In April 1962 following the late 1961 test series, an article in *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'* described the effects of a 50 megaton bomb as follows: a radius of total destruction of 40 kilometers (km) (25 miles), heavy damage up to 80 km (50 miles), and 9 million to 12 million persons

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"destroyed". 7/

The Soviet public has been familiarized additionally with the destructive effects of nuclear weapons through filmed television broadcasts. In April of this year a reliable observer who witnessed a civil defense film on the television set in a Kishinev hotel lobby reported that Soviet viewers gasped when shots of "atomic ruins" were shown. 8/ No reassurance could be found by the Soviet public in published statements that the imperialists are preparing for war, that a war between the capitalist and socialist states would be a rocket-nuclear war, and that probable targets would be centers of population, industry, and administration. 9/

Immediately before the Fifth All-Union DOSAAF Congress, the newspaper Krasnaya zvezda, on 20 May, carried an article by Lieutenant General S. Shatilov (First Deputy Chairman of DOSAAF) in which he announced that the "majority" of workers had successfully completed training in the civil defense course "Ready for Air Defense, First Grade." He further stated that instruction of the population in accordance with the norm "Ready for Air Defense, Second Grade" was being conducted. 10/ These are the third and fourth civil defense courses, respectively, that have been given to the Soviet population since 1955.

Army General Lelyushenko, DOSAAF Chairman, made a brief radio address on 21 May in which he said, "Millions of our society members are determined to fulfill with honor the tasks proceeding from the decisions of the 22nd Party Congress..." He stressed paramilitary sports (such as flying, parachute jumping, shooting, boating, motoring, and radio operating) as important means of enlisting young people in the activities of DOSAAF. 11/

An impressive group of military and civilian figures attended the Fifth All-Union DOSAAF Congress which opened on 22 May at the Kremlin Palace. 12/ In addition to leaders of DOSAAF -- such as Army General D. D. Lelyushenko and Marshal of the Soviet Union S. M. Budenny -- the following leaders were in attendance at various times:

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Marshal R. Ya Malinovskiy, Minister of Defense
Marshal K. K. Rokossovskiy, Deputy Minister of Defense
Marshal V. I. Chuykov, Deputy Minister of Defense and Commander in Chief of the Ground Troops
Chief Marshal of Aviation K. A. Vershinin, Commander in Chief of the Air Force
Marshal of Aviation V. A. Sudets, Deputy Commander in Chief of the Air Force
Fleet Admiral S. G. Gorshkov, Commander in Chief of the Navy
Army General A. A. Yepishev, Chief of the Main Political Administration of the Soviet Army and Navy
A. N. Shelepin, Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU
N. V. Mironov, Chief of the Section on Administrative Organs of the Central Committee of the CPSU
N. N. Romanov, Secretary of the All-Union Council of Trade Unions
S. P. Pavlov, First Secretary of the Central Committee, Komsomol
A. I. Kamshalov, Secretary of the Central Committee, Komsomol
N. M. Khlebnikov, Deputy Chairman of the All-Union Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge
G. M. Miterev, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Union of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Yu. D. Marshin, Chairman of the Central Council of the Union of Sports Societies and Organizations of the USSR*

*A number of the above listed leaders have civil defense responsibilities. The Chief of Civil Defense for the USSR is reported to be Marshal Chuykov. 13/ His logical assistant or executive for civil defense matters would be Colonel General O. V. Tolstikov. The Society for the Dissemination of Political and Scientific Knowledge organizes lectures on atomic defense and similar subjects in support of DOSAAF's civil defense training program. The Komsomol, the trade unions, and the Communist Party are frequently called on to support the DOSAAF and its training program. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies actively participate in the DOSAAF training program, handling first aid and other medical aspects of training. The Congress also was attended by guest delegations of "defense-sports societies" (that is paramilitary societies) of other countries of the Soviet Bloc. 14/

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Although his name does not appear in the list of dignitaries and speakers, it is assumed that Colonel General (Aviation) O. V. Tolstikov was present. Tolstikov, the former Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs for MPVO was elected to both the DOSAAF Central Committee and the DOSAAF Presidium. The only other high-level personage absent who might logically have been expected to attend was Marshal Biryuzov, chief of PVO Strany (Anti-air Defense of the Country), but his absence may be explained by a possible assignment to other duties.

Aleksandr Shelepin, Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, addressed the DOSAAF Congress on the first day, delivering the greetings of the Central Committee of the CPSU. Noting that the Central Committee of the CPSU "values highly the services of the...society, which unites in its ranks tens of millions of Soviet workers," Shelepin added, "The...Central Committee expresses the conviction that the members of the society with the combined support of the Party, of local government, and of the trade union organization, in collaboration with the Leninist Komsomol,* will...make a new contribution to the further strengthening of the defense capability of our great motherland." 15/

Although the presence of a high-ranking Party or government personality at a DOSAAF meeting is not unheard of, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] this council was composed of military leaders and Party officials. 16/ (It has been suspected that there exists in the USSR a continuing committee or council made up of Party, military, and government leaders that studies and formulates over-all military policy.) If Shelepin indeed represented such a group, it would further underline the present importance of DOSAAF and its activities.

At the opening session of the DOSAAF Congress on the morning of 22 May, Army General Lelyushenko, DOSAAF Chairman delivered what was probably the keynote address, a "report on the work and tasks of the society." According to a radio broadcast, Lelyushenko specifically called attention to DOSAAF's training of technical experts (drivers, mechanics, radio operators, and the like) for the economy and for the Soviet armed forces. He also stressed the achievements of

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DOSA AF in training "high class" sportsmen. In regard to civil defense, Lelyushenko is quoted as saying, "One of the most important tasks of DOSAAF is to train the population for protection from the means of mass destruction. Its importance becomes particularly great in connection with the present international situation. Millions of working people have gone through antiatomic defense training at the prompting of DOSAAF." 17/

In a published account of the same speech, Lelyushenko referred to "major shortcomings" in civil defense training. A final excerpt from his remarks on civil defense reads as follows:

This situation in civilian defense training will absolutely not be tolerated further. It is necessary to understand that civilian defense is a great public matter. Our most important mission is to increase the responsibility of all DOSAAF units in training the population in defense measures against means of mass destruction. We are compelled to mobilize an extensive public 'aktiv' for this matter. It is necessary to train public instructors well; to equip training areas as they should be equipped; to improve agitation, propaganda, and cultural enlightenment work; and to utilize the press, radio, and television for these ends. Appropriate supervision should be exercised over the training of the population in civil defense. It is very important to establish daily contact with civil defense staffs and Red Cross and Red Crescent committees and to conduct training together with them...18/

One radio broadcast mentioned a speech given by Professor G. A. Miterev at the DOSAAF Congress. Miterev is Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Union of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. According to the broadcast, he said, "Recently, 900,000 Soviet patriots have given their blood free of charge at blood donor points. The blood could save the lives of thousands of Soviet people." 19/ Unfortunately, nothing was specified as to the period of collection. If the collection was spread over 3 months, it is conceivable

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that the blood was for peacetime use. In any event, it is unusual that a Red Cross spokesman should speak on blood collection at a DOSAAF conference. The most obvious connection would be in a civil defense context. DOSAAF and the Soviet Red Cross are jointly involved in the Soviet public civil defense training program, and it is possible therefore that further blood collection for civil defense purposes was advocated at the Congress. A published account of Miterov's speech failed to include mention of blood donations, but the speech did stress the joint responsibility of DOSAAF and Red Cross and Red Crescent Committees in training the population for civil defense, calling for timely completion of the course "Ready for Air Defense, Second Grade." 20/

The concern of the military for civil defense preparation was demonstrated in a speech delivered to the Congress by Marshal V. I. Chuykov "on behalf of the Soviet Armed Forces and R. Ya. Malinovskiy, Minister of Defense USSR." In this speech, Chuykov mentioned US "preparation for aggression" and the necessity for further strengthening the military strength of the Soviet government. He also referred to the defense missions assigned by the Communist Party and the importance of DOSAAF activity in this connection.

Two of Chuykov's statements apparently define the position of civil defense in current Soviet military thought. At one point he stated, "Civilian defense, which in modern war is one of the factors determining the state's potential strength and ability to survive, has a very important place in strengthening the defense capability of the Soviet Union." Further on, he said, "...Civilian defense now must be considered as one of the basic elements in the over-all preparation of the country for defense."

Reemphasizing the urgency and primacy of DOSAAF's civil defense training mission, Chuykov said, "DOSAAF has been called upon to carry out immediately* the training of the population in defense measures against mass destruction...The fulfillment of this mission is primary* in DOSAAF activity and should be reflected in the DOSAAF statutes, a draft of which is being presented to the Congress...The fulfillment of these missions requires* the most complete utilization of the assistance of Party and Soviet organs..."21/

*Analyst's emphasis.

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The Congress concluded its work, according to Sovetskiy patriot, on 25 May with the passing of a resolution based on the report given by Lelyushenko, the approval of changes to DOSAAF statutes, and the election of new personnel to the DOSAAF Central Committee and the Central Auditing Commission.

Following the conclusion of the Congress, the DOSAAF Central Committee met and reelected Army General Lelyushenko as chairman and elected a presidium of the Central Committee, consisting of 31 members. Twelve of the newly elected presidium members hold military rank -- two marshals (Budenny and Rokossovskiy) one army general, three colonel generals, two lieutenant generals, one major general, and three colonels. 22/

Taken as a whole, these proceedings suggest that Soviet military planners have taken an increased interest in Soviet civil defense since some time in 1961 and that they are now exerting considerable pressure to see that the public civil defense training program -- a DOSAAF responsibility -- results in substantial accomplishment by the end of 1962. At the same time it seems reasonable that in addition to the public training courses other aspects of civil defense will also receive close attention, including such components as organization, supply, communications, staff planning, and alert exercises.

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